

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 24 June 2013

Present: Vice-Chancellor,
Deputy-Vice-Chancellor,
Professor A Caesar,
Professor S Croft,
Professor Christina Hughes,
Professor Christopher Hughes,
Professor J Labbe,
Professor J Palmowski,
Professor S Swain,
Professor P Thomas,
Professor P Winstanley,
Professor L Young.

Apologies: Professor T Jones, Mr N Swain, Professor M Taylor.

In Attendance: Registrar and Chief Operating Officer , Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Deputy Academic Registrar, Group Finance Director, Director of Development and External Affairs, Director of Estates, Director of Human Resources, Executive Officer (Vice-Chancellor's Office), Assistant Registrar (Governance), HR Adviser (Equality and Diversity) (for item 374/12-13), Head of Governance Support Services (for item 375/12-13).

369/12-13 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2013 be approved, subject to the following amendments (deletions ~~struck through~~, additions underlined):

360/12-13 REPORTED:

(...)

- (h) That whilst the report highlighted good practice in many departments, there was an overall lack of consistency in all four areas, which would be addressed by a PGT working group of the BGS and an UG PGR working groups of the BUGS BGS.

(...)

- (j) That enhanced training and monitoring of new scorers in the internal scholarship application process was required to ensure that all ~~departments~~ faculties were maximising their potential to attract centralised PGR scholarships.

370/12-13 QS World University Rankings

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the University has been ranked 3rd in the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) table of the world's top 50 universities, published on Tuesday 11 June 2013, making it the highest ranked European institution in this table.
- (b) That Warwick was also ranked 3rd in the world in the table published in 2012.

371/12-13

Monash-Warwick Alliance Joint Research Appointments

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the Monash-Warwick Alliance has made its first three joint research appointments.
- (b) That two leading polymer chemists, Professor Tom Davis and Professor Sébastien Perrier, would join the Alliance to work in the field of nanomedicine, and that Professor Adam Lee would join to work in the fields of chemistry and chemical engineering.

372/12-13

Jaguar Land Rover Research Programme

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That Business Secretary Vince Cable had visited WMG on 6 June 2013 to launch a £10 million simulation technology engineering research programme.
- (b) That Jaguar Land Rover would lead the five-year £10 million research programme with the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and four leading UK universities including WMG at Warwick.
- (c) That the project was funded by Jaguar Land Rover, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, and the partner Universities of Warwick, Loughborough, Leeds and Cambridge).
- (d) That the five projects announced during Dr Cable's visit would form the first phase of the two-stage programme, with WMG leading a project on visualisation and virtual experience.

373/12-13

Undergraduate Open Days

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the Undergraduate Open Days took place on Friday 21 and Saturday 22 June 2013, with thousands of prospective students and their parents visiting the campus.

RESOLVED:

That all staff and student volunteers be thanked for their help in creating the successful events.

374/12-13

Annual Report on Equality and Diversity

RECEIVED:

A paper updating the Committee on progress on key equality and diversity activities during 2012/13 (SC.223/12-13).

REPORTED (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education (Innovation, Employability and Widening Participation))

- (a) That the Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM) departments had made significant progress towards the achievement of Athena SWAN status at departmental level.
- (b) That a successful meeting had taken place between the University and Athena SWAN with regard to providing further clarification on Warwick Manufacturing Group's (WMG)

operating context, noting that follow-up work had been identified and was being progressed.

- (c) That the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) was developing a Gender Equality Charter mark that would extend the principles of Athena SWAN awards to all disciplines, noting that it was planned that the Dean of Warwick Business School (WBS) would be attending a seminar with the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to discuss this further.
- (d) That the University successfully achieved the HR Excellence in Research Award in January 2013.
- (e) That the University became a Stonewall Diversity Champion in 2012.

(by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer)

- (f) That feedback from the University's submission in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index was useful but that some of the recommendations made by Stonewall would be difficult to implement because of the University's generic approach to certain policies and procedures, noting that the University was working hard to embed many of the principles within its existing processes.

(by the HR Adviser (Equality and Diversity))

- (g) That reports from the Review of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) were due and would be reviewed by the University's Equality and Diversity Committee at its next meeting.

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Sciences)

- (h) That the Faculty offered networking lunches to mid-career staff and that it would be good if these lunches, and their beneficial impact, could be mentioned in the reports that go to the Senate and the Council in July 2013.

RESOLVED:

That information regarding the Faculty of Science's initiative on offering networking lunches for mid-career staff be added to the Equality and Diversity Committee reports that will be sent to the Senate and to the Council.

375/12-13

Strategy and Risk Update

CONSIDERED:

The University's Strategy and Risk update, including this term's proposed revisions to the Institutional Risk Register (SC.224/12-13).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

- (a) That the report included an update on the on-going developments to the Risk Management Strategy and Framework, along with the summer term update of the Institutional Risk Register.
- (b) That as members of the Committee had been involved in the revision of the University Strategy, discussion at the meeting would focus on the risk element of the update.

(by the Head of Institutional Governance Services)

- (c) That the Committee was invited to review the Institutional Risk Register (annex 2, SC.224/12-13) and to ascertain its completeness and accuracy before submission to

the Council in July 2013, noting that the termly update was the culmination of the 'bottom up' review process of risk that was conducted as part of the 2013 strategic planning round.

- (d) That a number of changes to the Institutional Risk Register were highlighted in the report:
 - (i) Risk Res2 (changes to the NHS) had been significantly revised following discussions with the Dean and Secretary of Warwick Medical School (WMS) so that it better reflected the breadth of the NHS-related risks facing WMS.
 - (ii) A risk had been added (Res5) in relation to the National Automotive Innovation Campus (NAIC) to reflect the scale of the opportunity that NAIC presented to leverage benefits and the requirement to manage any potential risks associated with a project of this size;
 - (iii) Risk T7 had been separated out such that T7 was solely concerned with student recruitment and the newly created T8 focused on the monitoring of the achievement of widening participation benchmark targets, noting that a significant number of departmental statuses for student recruitment-related risks did not reflect the current level of institutional concern in this area;
 - (iv) The information security element of risk O4 was currently of concern given recent developments, noting that this risk would shortly be broadened to cover other key compliance areas.
- (e) That whilst none of the risk statuses had changed since the Spring 2013 term Institutional Register update, each risk had benefited from an enriched level of detail as a result of the 2013 five year financial planning process.
- (f) That annex 1 of SC.224/12-13 set out the proposed new Institutional Risk Register template, noting the aims to provide:
 - (i) Greater clarity on both the cause and the consequence of a risk;
 - (ii) An assessment of the effectiveness of management measures;
 - (iii) A prediction of the status of each risk following completion of mitigating actions.
- (g) That, in relation to the proposed new template, the Senior Officers had recommended the addition of a 'review by' date column to ensure that the appropriate level of attention was given to each risk.

(by the Group Finance Director)

- (h) That the heat map was useful, as was the granularity provided by the proposed extended scale used to categorise risks.

(by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer)

- (i) That it would be useful if all risks were reviewed by the Senior Officers and a date for further review assigned for each risk.
- (j) That the Audit Committee would review the progress made thus far with the Risk Management Strategy and Framework over Summer 2013.
- (k) That the Steering Committee was pivotal in the development and management of the Risk Management Strategy and Framework and that members were therefore invited to notify the Head of Institutional Governance Services outside of the meeting of:

- (i) The risks that should be highlighted to the Council in July 2013;
 - (ii) Any comments on the proposed new Institutional Risk Register template.
- (l) That after the Head of Institutional Governance Services had collated the responses from members, the Vice-Chancellor would ratify the risks that should be highlighted to the Council.

(by the Vice Chancellor and President)

- (m) That it was recognised that the development of the University's Risk Management Strategy and Framework was a gradual process.

RESOLVED:

That Committee members be invited to comment on the following aspects of the University Risk update by e-mail outside of the meeting:

- (a) Whether the the Register accurately reflected all of the key risks currently facing the University;
- (b) Whether the proposed risk statuses for the Summer 2013 term were appropriate;
- (c) Which key risks should be highlighted at the July meeting of the Council;
- (d) Whether there were any further comments about the proposed new Institutional Risk Register template.

376/12-13

HEFCE Consultation on Student Number Controls Arrangements from 2014/15 Onwards: University Response

CONSIDERED:

The University's response to HEFCE's consultation on proposals to changes to how the student number control (SNC) will operate from 2014/15 onwards (SC.225/12-13).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That as part of the Consultation, the HEFCE had proposed introducing a system whereby institutions could be offered further flexibility to recover lost SNC numbers, of which the University was supportive, but that the University's response requested additional protection that sought to mitigate against the risk that a compound loss of numbers from the SNC could restrict institutions ability to accept high quality applicants when demand was high.
- (b) That whilst the University did not have many courses with an ABB offer, this was identified as an area of risk for the University despite the low numbers.
- (c) That some of the proposed changes could result in perverse recruitment behaviour from some institutions and that the University recommended that the HEFCE considered introducing either a 'higher floor' or a smoothing process to minimise such consequences.

(by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (d) That the proposed response was excellent.

RESOLVED:

That the University's response to the HEFCE consultation on proposals to changes to the SNC from 2014/15 be approved.

377/12-13

Report from the Fees Working Group

CONSIDERED:

The proposed changes to non-standard fee levels for 2014/15 as set out in the annual report from the Fees Working Group (SC.226/12-13).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer)

- (a) That representatives from the Students' Union (SU) had been engaged part-way through the development of the proposed changes to non-standard fee levels for 2014/15.
- (b) That the discussion with the SU representatives about the non-standard fee levels had been constructive and that engagement with the SU would be sought at the start of the process in the next academic year.

(by the Academic Registrar)

- (c) That the SU representatives were keen to have a fixed fee for Overseas students introduced to provide financial security and to enable students to plan finances across the life of their course, but the Fees Working Group raised a number of concerns and risks inherent in adopting such an approach, including the ability to protect the institution against unexpected significant inflation rises and the significant administrative complexities that would arise.
- (d) That the Group noted that a number of competitor institutions had recently introduced a fixed fee policy and agreed that it would be appropriate to seek feedback from those institutions on how they had managed the risks inherent in adopting such an approach, to help inform further internal discussions on the matter, noting that the matter of the fee set by competitor institutions would not be discussed.
- (e) That WBS had developed a well-informed pricing strategy that would result in some changes to non-standard fees, including small increases and decreases to reflect market forces, noting that the £2m Masters Scholarship fund introduced in 2012/13 had been uplifted to £2.275m with a proportion of the fund ring-fenced to support Home/EU students.
- (f) That the proposed increase in non-standard fees in Warwick Medical School (WMS) of 2.5 per cent was below the normal University inflation level but this was proposed to reflect the constraints in their market which is largely reliant on NHS funding.

(by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (g) That a number of other departments had introduced bursary support schemes and that any increases to non-standard fees were generally in line with the normal University inflation level.

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations set out in the paper be approved.

378/12-13 Appointment to the First Year Board of Examiners for the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences

RESOLVED:

That the appointment of Professor Jerry Ahearne to sit on the First Year Board of Examiners for the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences as the representative from the Department of French Studies, be approved on behalf of the Senate.

379/12-13 Senate Business

RESOLVED:

That the comments and recommendations of the Steering Committee on the items of business for the meeting of the Senate to be held on 3 July 2013 be approved as set out in the papers circulated for the meeting of the Senate, subject to clarifications as agreed in the meeting.

JH/CH/Steering/Minutes/2012-2013/24-06-2013